THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF CIVIL AVIATION (SHRI PRAFUL PATEL): (a) For the development of Khajuraho airport 355 acres (approx.) land has been acquired so far.

(b) and (c) Work of extension of runway from 6000 feet to 7500 feet has already been completed. Works relating to construction of new terminal building for 500 passengers and car park etc. are likely to be awarded by October, 2006 and the tentative date or completion is December, 2007.

New airport in Bodoland territory

2579. SHRI URKHAO GWRA BRAHMA: Will the Minister of CIVIL AVIATION be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that his Ministry has asked the State Government of Assam to move a proposal for a new airport likely to be set-up within the Bodoland Territorial Areas District (BTAD) of Assam;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) if not, whether in near future such proposal will come up from the Ministry?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF CIVIL AVIATION (SHRI PRAFUL PATEL): (a) No, Sir.

(b) Does not arise.

(c) The Bodoland Territorial Council (BTC) has requested the Central Government for establishment of an airport at Kokrajhar in Assam. The proposal is at preliminary stage.

Menu of Indian Airlines

2580. DR. K. MALAISAMY: Will the Minister of CIVIL AVIATION be pleased to state:

(a) the standard of food supply provided in the domestic flights of Indian Airlines in terms of quality, taste,and quantity in comparision to private airlines;

(b) whether the same kind of menu are supplied every time in the same sector leading to dislike and rejection by the passengers frequently and whether it cannot be changed periodically instead of continuing the same old menu for weeks and months together when the private airlines could do it; and

(c) where does Indian Airlines stand comparing private airlines in terms of services and the measures initiated to ensure that services are timely, adequate, continuous and equitable?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF CIVIL AVIATION (SHRI PRAFUL PATEL): (a) Indian Airlines engages only established Flight Caterers/Five Star/Reputed Hotels for uplifting meals. The menus and choice of meals offered compare very favourably with other domestic carriers.

(b) Indian Airlines has a set of multiple choice menus which is rotated on daily basis. The menus are changed after a few months so that regular passengers do not find it monotonous.

(c) Indian Airlines has systems in place for checking the quality and quantity of the meals at regular as well as on random basis on departing and arriving flights. Based on the constant feedback from passengers and crew members, immediate corrective action is taken at the caterer/staff level. Best practices prevalent in the domestic aviation industry are adopted by Indian Airlines Limited.

New airport at Muzaffarpur

†2581. SHRI MAHENDRA SAHNI: Will the Minister of CIVIL AVIATION be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government intend to build an airport in Muzaffarpur district of Bihar; and

(b) if so, by when and if not, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF CIVIL AVIATION (SHRI PRAFUL PATEL): (a) and (b) An airport already exists at Muzaffarpur which belongs to Airports Authority of India (AAI) and is suitable for operation of 20 seater class of aircraft in fair weather condition.

Airstrips in Arunachal Pradesh

2582. SHRI NABAM REBIA: Will the Minister of CIVIL AVIATION be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that a number of airstrips were constructed by Government in Arunachal Pradesh prior to the Chinese aggression of 1962;

†Original notice of the question was received in Hindi.